

Winter Students of Color Luncheon



Left to right: Dr. Terry Brown, Dr. Karin Edwards, student speaker Chishayla Kimmons, scholarship recipient Navjot Hundal, and Vanessa Neal.

Chishayla Kimmons' educational journey has been anything but ordinary—but that's exactly what makes it so inspiring. As the president of Clark College's Black Student Union and a soon-to-be graduate in business and marketing, Kimmons took center stage at the Winter Students of Color Luncheon on February 6 to share her story of perseverance, purpose, and resilience. From navigating multiple colleges to finding her home at Clark, she embodies the power of determination and the impact of community.

The free event is presented each term by Clark's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Multicultural Student Affairs. The purpose of the student luncheons is to allow students and employees to hear inspiring stories, connect with faculty, meet new friends, consider different career paths, and identify community resources and potential mentors.

President of the college's Black Student Union, Kimmons' educational journey hasn't been linear and has never been traditional. She started at Portland Community College and then attended Arizona State University. Next, she enrolled at Aveda Institute and currently is a student at Clark College. Her goal has always been to focus and finish what she started, even if she couldn't finish where she initially started. She says her motto will always be to never give up while inspiring others.

Dr. Edwards wrote in her weekly email to faculty and staff: "I had the pleasure of attending the Students of Color Luncheon, where Chishayla Kimmons, who will graduate in June with degrees in business and marketing, shared her journey. After

enrolling in several colleges, Chishayla found her place here at Clark. She expressed her appreciation for all the college has provided her.”

Q & A with Chishayla Kimmons

***Q:** How has your career path changed since you attended your first college classes at Portland Community College?*

CK: Since attending my first college classes at Portland Community College, my focus has always been business. Now, I am heavily focused on business and marketing.

***Q:** Along your journey, did you experience an obstacle that made you change your course—and it turned out to be a better option for you?*

CK: Having a child changed that course for me. Prior, I allowed life and outside factors to get in the way and to shift my focus, which resulted in me dropping out of college the first time. Having a child brought that initial hunger back. Now I am enrolled at Clark College, which in turn was a better overall option for me.

***Q:** What have you learned along your educational journey that you’d like to pass on as advice to Clark College students who are unsure of their career path?*

CK: Something that I have learned is to try all the things! You don’t have to fit in a box. If you want to be an astronaut, be one. If you want to be an astronaut and a chef, be that! You may find that along your journey, you want to switch courses and that is okay too! Keep trying until you find that career that best suits you and who you are today!

***Q:** What other encouragement do you offer to students?*

CK:

- Remember: It is never too late!
- Never, ever give up!
- Focus and finish!
- You got this!

Scholarships Awarded



Left to right: Dr. Terry Brown, Dr. Karin Edwards, scholarship recipients Mercy Kariuki and Navjot Hundal, and Vanessa Neal.

Two Clark students were awarded scholarships during the Students of Color Luncheon:

- Mercy Kariuki, a student enrolled in the Pre-Nursing DTA program, was awarded the Constance Baker Motley Scholarship.
- Navjot Hundal, a student enrolled in the Dental Hygienist program, was awarded a DREAMers Scholarship.

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) offers these and other scholarships in partnership with the Foundation and the community. Apply at the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion by emailing Rosalba Pitkin at rpitkin@clark.edu or calling 360-992-2672.

SAVE THE DATE: Next DEI Luncheon

- March 6 at noon: Students with Disability Luncheon in PUB 161

Connect with the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI):

- In-person: Diversity Center, Gaiser Hall 214
- Phone: 360-992-2292

- Email: diversity@clark.edu
- Website: www.clark.edu/cc/diversity